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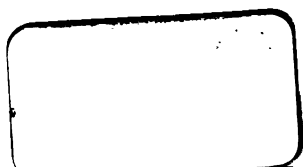
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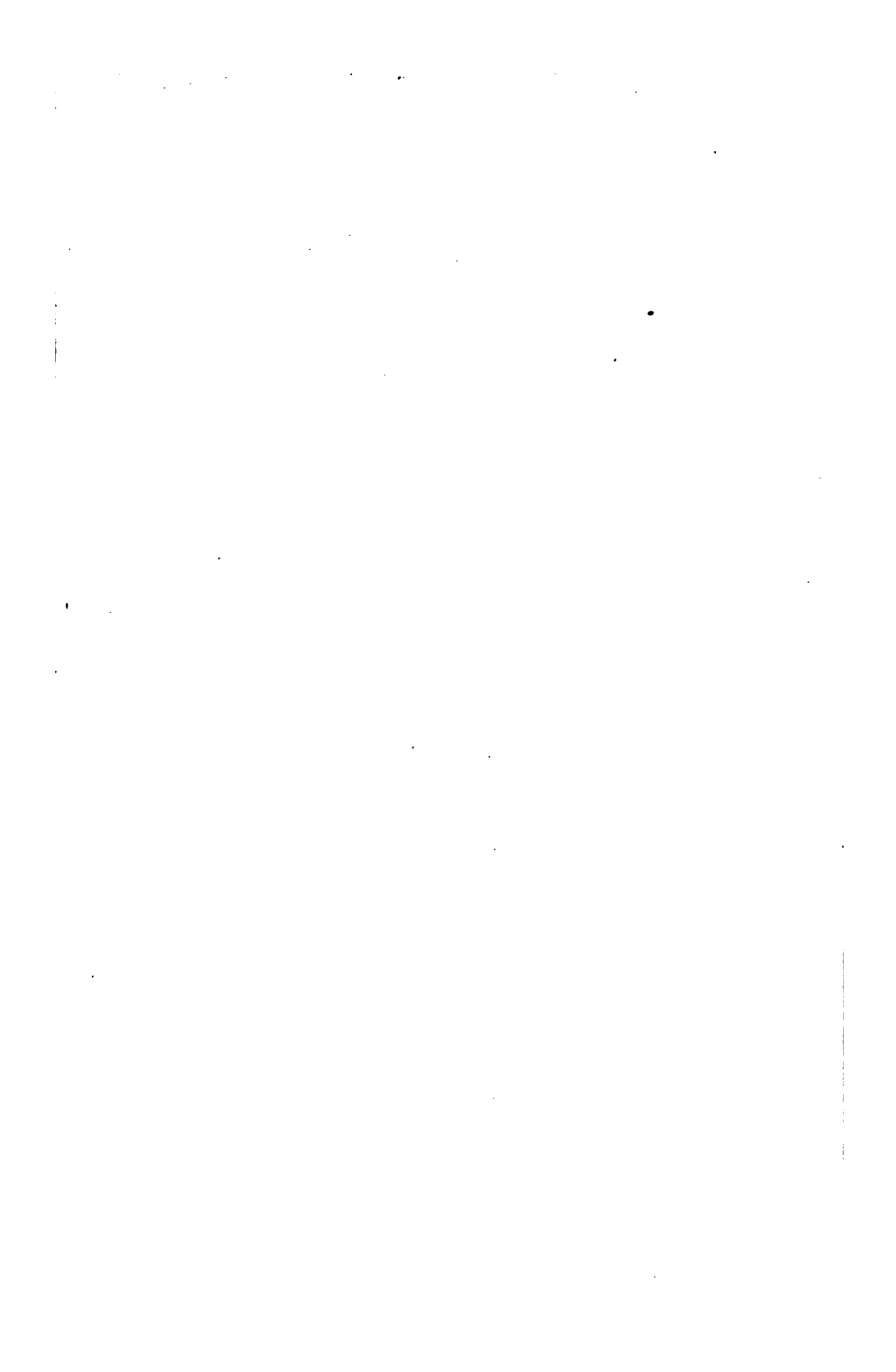
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THE STRATFORD RECORDS
AND
THE SHAKESPEARE AUTOTYPES.

THIRD EDITION.

THE STRATFORD RECORDS
AND THE
SHAKESPEARE AUTOTYPES.

A BRIEF REVIEW
OF
Singular Delusions that are current
at Stratford-on-Avon.

By THE SUPPOSED DELINQUENT.

THE THIRD EDITION.

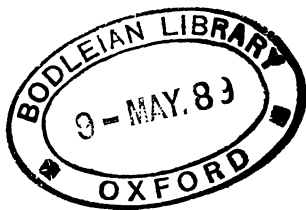
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MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

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1884-1885.

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

One of the most singular aspects of the following controversy is the determination of my opponents to proclaim that the mildest forms of replies are "attacks." I defend myself, in as temperate language as is possible, against injurious surmises, and am at once told by the Chairman of the Record Committee that I am making "attacks upon the Corporation of Stratford-on-Avon." In the second edition of this pamphlet I expose three misrepresentations against me (see pp. 37-39) that were made by the Stratford Herald, but that impartial journal, instead of withdrawing its misstatements, contents itself with giving an additional circulation to the "attack" theory. And so on.

Allegations of this kind are not likely to prejudice me with the Corporation, who will necessarily be aware of their injustice; but, if they are allowed to remain uncontradicted, they may do so with the public, the Court to which I am now appealing in all the matters under discussion. So far from having the remotest intention of "attacking the Corporation of Stratford-on-Avon," when, a few months ago, I

observed to my surprise and regret, that they were accused of having acted discourteously to me, I at once (see p.) defended them against such an imputation.

The Chairman of the Record Committee further accuses me of having "placed myself in a position of hostility to the Corporation." I have done nothing of the kind. There was certainly no hostile feeling on either side up to the January of last year, as will be seen from the complimentary resolution then passed in my favour by the Corporation and from my reply, both of which will be found at pp. 54-55, *and every line that I have since written that refers to the Corporation in any possible way is given in the following pages.* I leave it to the public to judge if there is to be found, in those pages, the remotest expression of hostility to the Corporation. It is also my belief that there is not a word therein that can afford them a legitimate ground for offence. If there is, it is certainly unintentional on my part, and I shall be ready to withdraw it and express my regret for its insertion.

No body of gentlemen can complain of my replying in plain language to such a letter as that which will be found at p. 47, and which was published early in this month by the Chairman

of the Record Committee. Neither can they complain of my replying to statements and insinuations which would lead the public to believe that I did not execute my work for the Corporation in a conscientious manner. This little pamphlet is, as an impartial reader will see, entirely defensive. The only portions of it that may at first sight be thought to be exceptions are the indications that the neo-paleographers of Stratford-on-Avon are apt to commit oversights in the prosecution of their recently adopted studies. But these indications are accessory to my defence. They will lessen before the public the gravity of the adverse insinuations by which some of those gentlemen have honoured my labours on the records.

J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS.

Hollingbury Copse, Brighton,
20 February, 1885.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

Singular misconceptions being prevalent at Stratford respecting my record-work and the treatment that I have met with in that town, I am tempted to devote a few pages to the subject ; and the rather as those delusions have lately assumed a definite form and made a public appearance in the columns of an important local journal. The following, for example, is the commencement of a recent leading article in the Stratford-on-Avon Herald, a newspaper which has a large circulation in the town and neighbourhood,—

The Stratford Corporation are in possession of many very interesting records extending from the earliest times, but it is only recently that the value of these documents has dawned upon the Corporate mind. They were permitted to lie in the muniment-room at the Birthplace unclassified, uncalendared, uncared for, and this indifference to their existence, had it continued, would have led ultimately to their decay, and consequent loss to the town. A little time ago attention was directed to the condition of these records, and the Corporation was prevailed upon to appoint a committee to superintend their classification and calendaring. Mr. Hardy, a gentleman in every way qualified for the work, was entrusted with the task of reducing these records from their chaotic state to something like order, and it is admitted